



MEETING SUMMARY

TRANS-LAKE WASHINGTON PROJECT TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND INDUSTRY, SEATTLE, WA OCTOBER 25, 2000 - 10:00 A.M. TO 12:00 NOON

WELCOME AND AGENDA REVIEW

Pat Serie, EnviroIssues, opened the meeting and reviewed the agenda. She stated that the focus of the meeting would be a review of the second level screening criteria. No changes were made to the agenda.

SECOND LEVEL SCREENING REVIEW

Jeff Peacock, Parametrix, Lorie Parker, CH2M Hill, and John Perlic, Parametrix, presented an overview and led a discussion of the second level screening criteria. A graphic was presented which clearly delineated two steps in the second level screening: the alternatives definition process and associated modal evaluation, and the evaluation of the multi-modal alternatives.

EFFECTIVENESS

Jeff Peacock and John Perlic presented the effectiveness criteria. King Cushman, PSRC, raised a question about the first step in the second level screening – the elimination of modal alternatives – and asked what the basis of eliminating alternatives would be. How would the impacts' characteristics and performance possibilities be qualified to measure how directly an alternative meets the purpose and need?

Jeff Peacock stated that, though the alternatives are currently all assumed to be flat, he would expect multilevel options to be considered fairly early in the process. These will be driven by performance as well as impacts.

John Perlic stated that the effectiveness criteria will help evaluate the combinations of alternatives as a single set of multi-modal alternatives. Information will be presented by mode, and then a weighted average travel time for all modes, for all people, will be given. Total hours of delay and overall system congestion will be presented for the SR 520 corridor as well as for the sub-area. Transit ridership projections will focus primarily on the HCT segments, and will be evaluated for Westside, Eastside, and cross-lake ridership. System-wide transit boardings will also be measured for HCT, and information will be presented by station.

King Cushman stated that the effects of measures on SR 520 will impact the behavior and costs in a much broader regional planning area, and that broader analysis should be captured. He also stated that measurement should be taken in relation to two base cases: 1) current system now with no action; 2) 2020 outlook with no action. All changes to the system could be measured against these two base cases. John Perlic stated that this will be done.

Jim Arndt, City of Kirkland, voiced a concern with projecting numbers into the future, especially with HCT possibilities. They may not capture the full potential benefit of what that system may be. John Perlic stated that HCT extensions to Redmond, Totem Lake, Issaquah, downtown Bellevue are assumed at this point, but additional extensions beyond these are currently unknown. King Cushman stated that a snapshot at an incremental point in time may help indicate what is needed and possible trends, e.g. snapshots at 2010 as well as 2020.

Jeff Peacock stated that incremental time periods can be analyzed, but a balance will need to be achieved with the amount of work that can be accomplished in a short amount of time. PSRC projections for 2030 will be incorporated into the EIS itself, while data for 2020 will be used for this phase, as it is currently the most reliable set of data.

Peter Dewey, University of Washington, suggested some historical research might yield insight into potential long-term impacts of different choices. It may yield some qualitative data about mode selections. Len Newstrum, Town of Yarrow Point, asked for integration with the I-405 corridor study in the near future, especially to correlate HCT options and assumptions.

As a follow up to questions about the HCT options on the Eastside, Don Billen, Sound Transit, stated that the Sound Transit question on the table is whether the Long Range Vision should be amended. Options for HCT include using HOV lanes or exclusive rights-of-way. Modeling HCT options should account for the current long range vision, and demonstrate effects of changes to the long range vision. Multiple options exist in both corridors for how the transit networks will work on both sides of the lake.

King Cushman stated that the intermediate timepoint analyses to show trends would be most helpful in the second phase of the second level screening, to show tradeoffs among various options. John Perlic stated that an interim year analysis was intended for the EIS itself, and that it usually shows up there. Relative comparisons would be most useful if they will affect the outcome of decisions.

Traffic volumes were discussed. Information about arterial links will include Lake Washington Boulevard, Montlake Boulevard, and others. The committees, and communities, will provide input about which other arterials should be considered in the analysis.

Person miles traveled and person hours traveled will be added to the vehicle miles traveled (VMT) / vehicle hours traveled (VHT) criteria already delineated in the criteria document. A question about how freight mobility factors into this was also raised. Priority schemes for freight movement and freight affected will be analyzed.

Discussion of traffic congestion raised questions of how arterial congestion will be reflected. Ratios of vehicles to capacity (V/C) were suggested as a way of comparing the different

alternatives. A performance level of service on both freeways and arterials was suggested rather than evaluating congestion at individual intersections. Improved capacity on freeways may improve congestion on arterials. John Perlic stated that it may be difficult to set all the details now, but characterization is anticipated to include: person throughput; vehicle queue lengths – both averages and maximums on arterials and freeways; and demand reduction by both trips and mode shifts.

There was some question and discussion about the assumptions for potential mode shifts, and it was stated that a briefing on transportation modeling might be in order. Rob Fellows asked for consensus that these are the right measures, assuming that the committee will be comfortable with how the measures are generated. Len Newstrum suggested changing wording from ‘potential’ and ‘anticipated’ morning and afternoon mode shifts, to ‘probable’ mode shifts in the criteria document.

Susan Sanchez asked about the extent to which reliability and safety depend on other strategies, such as TDM. John Perlic stated that when combining TDM with HCT, the TDM may critically enhance ridership on HCT. The criteria point these out more explicitly, and the reliability and safety measure may need to be provided as information, rather than given explicit ratings. Doug Schulze stated different design issues such as curves and merge points may indicate different travel times, especially as relating to reliability and safety.

Susan Sanchez stated that system compatibility, when looked at in isolation in terms of queue lengths and congestion, does not really describe how the alternative improves or degrades performance at connecting facilities. King Cushman stated that ‘system continuity’ should read ‘system connectivity and continuity.’ Rob Fellows indicated that this criterion should not be so highway specific. Peter Dewey stated that the use of ‘regional’ in the criteria question loses arterials, though the project team states that arterials will also be considered.

Len Newstrum stated that maintaining capacity and continuity are not the same question. The question here is with the compatibility of Eastside and Westside planning. Proposed MTP revisions call for a look at light rail already.

Suggested changes:

- Add ‘person miles traveled’ and ‘person hours traveled’ to the VMT/VHT criterion.
- Change words ‘potential’ and ‘anticipated’ morning and afternoon mode shifts, to ‘probable’ mode shifts.

Changes suggested to ‘System Compatibility’ (p. 9) included:

- ‘Compatibility with Sound Transit’s Long-range Vision’ was changed to ‘Sound Transit’s Long-range Vision’.
- ‘Is the alternative compatible with other planned transportation improvement projects?’ was changed to ‘Is the alternative compatible with other transportation improvement projects and plans?’

- Change ‘System continuity’ to ‘System connectivity and continuity.’

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Lorie Parker reviewed second level criteria for environmental impacts. Language changes were made to the fish-bearing environment, to clarify that both direct and indirect impacts are being considered. Susan Sanchez asked about what addressing the demographic characteristics of affected neighborhoods means. She also asked if there will be visual and view analyses at this level.

Mitch Wasserman asked why protection and mitigation to neighborhoods is not emphasized as much in the criteria for their contribution to making a particular alternative feasible as TDM measures for reliability and safety. Both protection and mitigation should be a part of the full analysis of the alternatives.

A suggestion was made to show potential problems, potential solutions, and situations where a solution may not be mitigated. A suggestion was made for changes to the text.

Points raised included:

- When will displacements and disruptions be quantified to provide protection and mitigation?
- Nothing in the natural environment criteria addresses non-ESA species. It was suggested to look at existing native plant communities, existing habitat connectivity, and wildlife morbidity data. A look at general habitat would allow both aquatic and upland communities to be considered.
- Guidance on stormwater issues and water resources should be looking for more than 100% treatment for future projects.
- Air quality impacts should be quantitative. Potential construction impacts – emissions, dust, etc., - should be quantitative so that good air quality impacts are not thrown out, and bad ones retained. Air quality in the region will be more critical in the next five years than anytime afterwards. Jeff Peacock suggested taking a high clip look at construction air quality impacts, indicating a high, medium, or low impact. Baseline comparison can be the construction of the floating portion of the bridge in the no action alternative.

There was discussion about the addition of a criterion that directly addresses impacts to communities that read:

*‘Dependency on neighborhood protection and/or environmental mitigation improvements
The extent to which the alternative depends on protections and/or environmental mitigation strategies.’*

There was some feeling that all solutions will have impacts, and that if the criterion above does not help decide what will be screened, that it should not be included. On the other hand, the

criterion might serve to identify potential mitigations at the end of the second level screening, giving an idea of the cumulative environmental impacts. Language was finally suggested and agreed upon which added to the first paragraph under *B. Environmental Impacts*, as indicated below.

Addition of TDM measures to any of the alternatives would also similarly change the impacts of such an alternative. Therefore, it was suggested that additional criteria indicating necessity of TDM for particular alternatives be applied for all criteria, rather than a separate evaluation of TDM.

Suggested Changes:

- *B. Environmental impacts* (p. 10). Continue the first sentence: ‘, and the relative extent to which the alternative may require additional protection and/or avoidance, minimization, and mitigation.’
- *Fish bearing streams / Threatened and endangered species* (p.11). Add ‘and probability’ to read ‘A qualitative rating will reflect the seriousness and probability of the potential direct...’
- *Critical upland habitat / Threatened and endangered species* (p.11). Add ‘and probability’ to read ‘Results will be reported by area of habitat affected, along with a qualitative rating that reflects the seriousness and probability of impacts and potential ...’
- *Wetlands/Shorelines* (p. 11). Add ‘and habitat area’ to read ‘A preliminary quantitative estimate... mapped wetlands, shorelines, and habitat areas will be developed.’
- *Air quality* (p. 12). Delete ‘qualitative’ to read ‘A screening level evaluation ...’

COST

There was some discussion about the inclusion of private costs, and to what extent private choices will be influenced by the availability of transportation alternatives. Incremental increases in transit ridership will be lower for fixed guideway systems than for buses. Caveats to what looks high or low as capacity increases should be heeded.

Suggested changes:

- *C. Cost* (p. 12). Change first sentence to read: ‘Cost information for each alternative will include full public and private capital, operations/maintenance, and life-cycle costs.’
- *Private costs* Delete this paragraph as this is captured in the modified introductory sentence on cost.

SUMMARY

The committee generally agreed that the second level screening criteria were ready to present to the Executive Committee, with changes as noted. Additional concerns of committee members should be presented to Pat Serie.

MEETING HANDOUTS

- Agenda
- First Level Screening Evaluation Results - Tech Steering Cmte Review Draft with comments, Oct 12, 2000
- Technical Memo - Alternatives Analysis - Draft Screening Process and Criteria, Oct 16, 2000
- Summary of Technical Steering and Advisory Committee Input to First Level Screening, Memo - Oct 16, 2000
- Alternatives Selection Process - graphic
- Second Level Screening Criteria - presentation to Executive Committee
- Community Design Workshops Factsheet
- Early Actions Memo

ACTION ITEMS

Project team will analyze additional work needed to create trend data at multiple timepoints, and report back with ideas on how this might be incorporated into the second phase of second level screening.

MEETING ATTENDEES

Committee Members

| Present | Name | | Organization |
|---------|---------|----------|--|
| X | Arndt | Jim | City of Kirkland |
| X | Billen | Don | Sound Transit |
| | Bowman | Jennifer | Federal Transit Administration |
| | Brooks | Allyson | Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation |
| | Conrad | Richard | City of Mercer Island |
| X | Cushman | King | Puget Sound Regional Council |
| X | Dewey | Peter | University of Washington |
| | Fisher | Larry | Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife |
| X | Francis | Roy | King County Department of Transportation |

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|---|-----------|---------|---|
| | Gibbons | Tom | National Marine Fisheries Service |
| | Kennedy | Jack | U.S. Army Corps of Engineers |
| | Kenny | Ann | Washington Department of Ecology |
| X | Kircher | Dave | Puget Sound Clean Air Agency |
| X | Leonard | Jim | Federal Highway Administration |
| X | Marpert | Terry | City of Redmond |
| X | Newstrum | Len | Town of Yarrow Point |
| X | Pratt | Austin | U.S. Coast Guard, 13 th District |
| X | Rave | Krista | U.S. Environmental Protection Agency |
| X | Sanchez | Susan | City of Seattle |
| X | Schulze | Doug | City of Medina |
| | Sparrman | Goran | City of Bellevue |
| X | | | (Bernard van de Kamp) |
| X | Sullivan | Maureen | WSDOT – NW Region |
| X | Teachout | Emily | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service |
| X | Wasserman | Mitch | City of Clyde Hill |
| | Willis | Joe | Town of Hunts Point |

Other attendees

Virginia Gunby, 1000 Friends of Washington
Pete Beaulieu, PSRC
Jennifer Quan, USFWS
Philip Grega, Seattle

Project Team

Rob Fellows, WSDOT
Lorie Parker, CH2M Hill
Pat Serie, EnviroIssues
Jeff Peacock, Parametrix
John Perlic, Parametrix
Kimberly Farley, WSDOT
Amy Grotefendt, EnviroIssues
Paul Hezel, EnviroIssues

PJH